

R E M A R K S

OF THE

HON. JAMES REDINGTON,

OF ST. LAWRENCE,

IN ASSEMBLY, ON THE EVENING OF FEBRUARY 18, 1863, IN COM-  
MITTEE OF THE WHOLE,

ON THE

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

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# REMARKS.

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MR. CHAIRMAN :

In justice to myself, I must say my health is not adequate to the performance of the duty that I have assigned to myself. Under ordinary circumstances, and in good health, I am fearful that I should fall far short of what might be expected, and certainly far more so when feeling indisposed. The Constitution of the State of New York makes it the duty of the Governor of the State "to communicate by message to the Legislature, at every session, the condition of the state, and recommend such matters to them as he shall deem expedient." Strictly speaking, the language of the constitution might be construed to limit his statements and recommendations to matters relating solely to state policy. But, Sir, considering the intimate connection between the state and national government in the disastrous war that is now upon us, and in the unhappy controversy which threatens the destruction of our country, it was most certainly justifiable in the Governor to occupy so great a portion of the message in national affairs.

I hold in my hand, Sir, the message of Governor Seymour to the legislature, and I propose to read a few lines from the fifteenth page of the message under the head of "causes of the war." "Affrighted at the ruin they have wrought, the authors of our calamities at the North and South insist, that this war was caused by an unavoidable contest about slavery. This has been the subject, not the cause of controversy." Now, Sir, almost the whole of my remarks will be confined to one line of this message. I know full well the high position of Governor Seymour, his unbounded intellect, his moral worth and the esteem in which he is held by a great portion of the people of the state. Yet when I find statements in his message which are not true (I speak this in no offensive sense), which are inconsistent with matters of history, I feel in duty

bound, humble as I am, representing the constituency that I do, to join issue directly and positively with the Governor, and I enter my most solemn protest against the conclusions which he has drawn. I say, Sir, that the North is not equally guilty with the South for the rebellion that is upon us. I lay the whole blame of this wicked rebellion to the Southern States. I charge directly home to slavery not only as being the subject but the cause of the controversy, and, Sir, I expect in the course of argument to prove it, and I hope I may have the patient attention of the committee while I do it. Sir, our Republican form of government was established by the patriotism and blood of our Revolutionary fathers, after seven years of sanguinary war with the most powerful government in the world. A remark was made by the gentleman from Erie (Mr. Seymour), the other day to this effect, that if any son of a revolutionary father did not oppose the "arbitrary arrests," he ought to find a political grave so deep that there would be no resurrection. I wish him to understand, Sir, that I am the son of one of those revolutionary sires. My father saw service during the entire revolutionary war. He was present, Sir, at the battle of Stillwater, at the taking of Burgoyne. He has seen that immortal man (Mr. R. looked at the picture of Washington in rear of the Speaker's chair), whose picture is now looking down upon us. He left little property for his children, but he left a far richer legacy to them in the memory of the share he had, and the acts he performed in the struggle for our independence.

Mr. Chairman—At the termination of the war, slavery had a foothold in the country. It was introduced into the colonies at a very early day. The government of Great Britain is responsible for the introduction of slavery into this country. Her laws at that time, to a very considerable

extent, protected the commerce in slaves upon the high seas. She is responsible for the introduction of it, but not for its perpetuation. At the time of the adoption of the Constitution, slavery existed in every state of the Union, with the exception of Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

Mr. Chairman—You will recollect that during the struggle of the revolutionary war, articles of confederation were formed for the government of the thirteen states; but they were found entirely inadequate for the purposes designed. And in consequence, a national convention was called in 1787, by the patriots and statesmen of that day, whose eminence in that respect have never been exceeded. The object of the convention was to frame a constitution adapted to the wants of the country, its rising greatness and its extensive domains. Now, Sir, in order to get at the views and opinions of the great men of that age upon slavery, we can only quote from their opinions and speeches. I do it under the fullest conviction that I shall be able to establish the fact that they contemplated in their acts the final extinguishment of slavery in the country. That they considered its continued existence, for any length of time, entirely incompatible with our republican form of government; that the Constitution they framed furnishes evidence of this.

I now, Sir, proceed to give the opinions of the early fathers, previous to the formation of the Constitution. Dr. Benjamin Rush, an eminent man of that day, says: "Domestic slavery is repugnant to the principles of Christianity; this is a strong expression, but it is just. I believe that God governs the world, and I believe it to be a maxim in his, as in our, courts, that those who ask for equity ought to do it."—*Letter from Spain*, 1780.

John Jay says: "Till America comes into this measure (gradual emancipation) her prayers to heaven will be impious."

Dr. Benjamin Franklin said: "Slavery is an atrocious debasement of human nature."

George Washington says, in 1786, in a letter to Robert Morris: "I can only say that there is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do to see a plan adopted for the abolition of it (Slavery); but there is only one proper and effectual mode in which it can be accomplished, and that is by legislative authority, and this, so far as my suffrage will go, shall never be wanting."—9 *Sparks' Washington*, p. 6, 158.

Thomas Jefferson, in his Notes on Virginia says: "The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions; the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other. I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and that his justice cannot sleep forever."

These, Sir, are the words of Thomas Jefferson, the distinguished patriot and statesman, at that period of our history. They are the words of a Virginia slaveholder, and the voice of him who drafted the declaration of American Independence, and who was since a distinguished Democratic President of the Republic.

William Pinckney, of the Maryland House of Delegates, in that state, in 1789, said: "Sir, iniquitous, and most dishonorable to Maryland, is that dreary system of partial bondage which her laws have hitherto supported with a solicitude worthy of a better object, and her citizens, by her practice countenanced, founded in a disgraceful traffic, to which the parent country lent its fostering aid from motives of interest, but which she would have disdained to encourage had England been the mart of such inhuman merchandise. Its continuance is as shameful as its origin."

I have thus, Sir, briefly as possible, introduced some extracts showing the opinion of some of the early fathers upon the subject of slavery. I now proceed to show some of the opinions of those eminent and distinguished statesmen who framed the Constitution of the United States. I think I shall be able to show that the Constitution itself bears intrinsic evidence that its authors contemplated the speedy extinguishment of slavery.

James Madison, formerly president of the United States, we all know who he was; his democratic antecedents; we all know that he was a Virginia slaveholder. History informs us of the active part he took in the deliberations of the Constitutional Convention of 1787. He says, in that Convention: "That it is wrong to admit in the Constitution the idea that there could be property in man."—3d *Madison Papers*, 1429.

"On the motion of Mr. Randolph, another Virginia slaveholder," the word "servitude" was struck out, and "service" unanimously inserted; the former being thought to express the condition of slaves and the latter the obligation of free persons."—3d *Madison Papers*, 1560.

Now, Sir, these remarks of James Madison, and the motion made by Mr. Randolph, had reference to the third subdivision of section 2, article 4th of the Constitution, where it reads: "No person held to service in one state, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, shall be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service may be due." The word person was inserted for the express purpose of avoiding the idea that there could be property in human beings. And the word "servitude" was struck out and the word "service" inserted for the reason stated by Mr. Randolph, both upon the suggestion of eminent Virginia statesmen and slaveholders. How careful these public men were to submit to the public opinion of that day; how careful not to run counter to the growing sentiment in favor of freedom against slavery.

James Wilson, a prominent member of the convention, speaking of the power of Congress over the slave trade after twenty years, said—"I consider this clause as laying the foundation for banishing slavery out of the country, and though the period is more distant than I could wish it, it will produce the same kind gradual change as was produced in Pennsylvania. The new states which are to be formed will be under

the control of Congress, and slavery will never be introduced among them." *2d Elliott's Debates*, 452.

These remarks relate, Sir, to article 1st, section 9, subdivision 1st, of the Constitution, where it reads, "The migration or importation of such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit shall not be prohibited by Congress prior to the year 1808. The introduction of that clause into the Constitution was no doubt based upon the idea, that after the period of twenty years alluded to, measures would be adopted by Congress for the prohibition of the commerce in human beings upon the high seas, and that was the result of it, for an act of Congress was passed March 2, 1807, in which slavery importation was prohibited after January 1, 1808.

I am aware, Sir, that these remarks may be dry, but these are stubborn facts. It requires patience to look into these arguments. I could declaim and fix better attention perhaps if I should desist from reading further extracts. (Some member cried go on.) You will perceive, Sir, that these opinions were by no means confined to the free states. In the ratification convention of Virginia, Mr. Johnson said, "They tell us that they see a progressive danger of bringing about emancipation; the principle has begun since the Revolution; let us do what we will, it will come round. Slavery has been the foundation of much of that impiety and dissipation which has so much disseminated among our countrymen. If it were totally abolished it would do much good." *3d Elliott's Debates*, 3, pp. 6-48.

Mr. Randolph said, "I hope there are none here who, considering the subject in the calm light of philosophy, will advance an objection dishonorable to Virginia, that, at the moment they are securing the rights of their citizens, there is a spark of hope that those unfortunate men now held in bondage, may, by the operation of the general government, be made free." *3d Elliott's Debates*, p. 598.

Patrick Henry, in the same convention, said, "Another thing will contribute to bring this about: Slavery is detested, we despise it with all the pity of humanity." *Debates in Virginia Convention*, p. 464.

And here let me pause one moment to inquire who was Patrick Henry? He, Sir, was the eloquent champion of colonial rights in the province of Virginia. He, Sir, perhaps more than any man living, certainly within the limits of Virginia, by his persuasive powers, infused life vigor and energy among the people in favor of freedom and resistance to tyrannical power.

In the North Carolina convention Mr. Iredall, afterwards a Judge of the United States Supreme Court, said, "When the entire abolition of slavery takes place, it will be an event which must be pleasing to every generous mind and every friend of human nature." *Power of Congress*, pp. 31, 32.

While the Constitutional Convention of 1787 was sitting, the old Congress was in session. The latter body at that time passed the celebrated

ordinance forbidding and entirely excluding slavery from all that territory known as the Northwest Territory. History informs us of the fact that Thomas Jefferson was the author of this ordinance, that his mind foresaw the immense value of it, and comprehended the untold blessings that were to flow from it.

The very first Congress that convened under the new Constitution ratified this ordinance. Mr. Chairman, where was this territory and what was its condition? At the time of the passage of the ordinance it was almost one unbroken wilderness, scarcely inhabited by other than the Indian and the wild beast of the forest. It was bounded on the south by the Ohio, east by Pennsylvania, north by the lakes, and stretching onward nearly, if not quite, to the British possessions, and on the west by the Mississippi river. Within the limits of this vast country there now exists those populous states of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin. What, Sir, would have been the condition of those states now, if slavery had been engrafted upon their soil? Or would they indeed have existed at all in their present shape? What would be the condition of that country now if it was owned by some one hundred and fifty thousand slaveholders, lording it over their human chattels with a rod of iron; and what would be the condition of the white population too poor to own slaves? I need only point to the Gulf States for an answer. I may now with more propriety add what is the real condition of the States above named, that have come into existence under the benign influence of the Jeffersonian ordinance. Look, Sir, at their industrious and happy population. Look at the extent of their commerce sent down those tributaries to the Mississippi river, to the Gulf of Mexico, and from thence to the ports of the world. Look at the immense amount of her surplus products that find their way, through artificial channels, to the tide waters of the Hudson, and from thence to the metropolis, to seek their final destination. Are not those States now, Sir, the granary of the world? Is not the Eastern Continent dependent upon them to feed their starving millions?

Look again, Sir, at their schools, seminaries of learning and colleges—their churches and temples of worship. Look at their millions of population of men, women and children surrounded with all the comforts of social life, with nothing to embitter, always excepting the rebellion. When we have all taken a full survey of this picture, let us offer our silent thanks to Heaven that slavery was never permitted to curse this fair heritage. Who can doubt the wishes and desires of our fathers when this vast empire was consecrated to freedom.

After the lapse of six or seven years an event took place that changed the whole aspect of affairs. In the limits of Connecticut, one of those New England States now so much hated by traitors North and South, there lived a "Yankee" by the name of Eli Whitney. He, Sir, while a resident of New Haven, in 1793, invented the celebrated "Cotton Gin." It was patented

in 1793. This invention infused new life and vigor in the production of cotton. It increased the demand for slave labor, and in time increased the demand for slave territory.

Why, Sir, at the time of this invention by a "Yankee" (for who, at the South, had the ingenuity to invent a machine for picking cotton?) cotton could hardly be considered an article of export. In 1793 the whole amount exported did not exceed the sum of fifty thousand dollars. Now, Sir, or rather at the time of the outbreaking of this rebellion, the exportation of cotton reached the enormous magnitude of one hundred millions of dollars and more. Now, Sir, very little thought is required to discover where the driftings would be under circumstances like these. Wealth obtained by grinding the face of the poor and wringing it out of the unpaid services of others, has a remarkable tendency to blunt the moral perceptions. Avarice and power soon made the discovery that slavery had constitutional guarantees and what was considered a curse was excused upon the plea of necessity. From this period of time slave-labor began to grapple with free labor for the ascendancy. It adopted measures for the accomplishment of its ends. The next event that happened, of importance to the South, was the purchase of the Louisiana Territory. This took place in 1803, while Thomas Jefferson was President of the United States. This vast and almost interminable extent of country formerly belonged to Spain, and was by Spain ceded to France. About this time the port of New Orleans was closed against the commerce of the western states, which were being rapidly populated. A matter affecting those localities so seriously caused no small excitement, and that, in conjunction with southern clamor demanded the purchase of the territory. Thomas Jefferson had constitutional objections to the purchase. But the measure was popular from its necessity. The commerce upon the tributaries of the Mississippi demanded an outlet, which could not be refused, and consequently the purchase was affected. The country was bounded on the West by the length of the Mississippi, on the North by the British possessions, and stretching itself far in the west over the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. Unfortunately for the country there were about forty thousand slaves, mostly located about New Orleans. It was contended that this fact blotted the whole land with the institution, and thereby was the slave power strengthened. Louisiana was admitted as a state in 1812. But I must pass on more rapidly. In 1819 Missouri demanded admission as a sovereign state into the Union. She demanded an entrance with slavery engrafted upon her constitution. The discussion of the question of her admission, in Congress, caused a tremendous excitement North and South. Such was the public sentiment of the North that a stern resistance was made to the admission of any more slave states from the Louisiana purchase. As usual, the South threatened dissolution. After long discussions and unbounded efforts on both sides, the matter was

finally settled by a *compromise*. Missouri was admitted into the Union *with slavery*, but with an agreement that all that portion of the Louisiana purchase lying North of latitude 36 degrees and 30 minutes should be forever free. This compromise was effected by southern votes and in accordance with southern demands. Here, again, the peculiar institution triumphed. I might as well add here that Florida was purchased of Spain in 1819, and admitted as a state in 1836, constituting all that extensive peninsula at the southern extremity of the United States, and devoted to all the purposes of slavery. In the history of events Texas next demands our attention.

Texas was originally a portion of Mexico, and while under Mexican laws slavery was not tolerated or permitted; but Texas rebelled from the government of Mexico and obtained her independence, and being peopled mostly from the southern states, she at once adopted a constitution suitable to the feelings of that class of community. She lingered along in a miserable condition as a Republic for a few years, and then sought to be annexed to the United States. Here then the perplexing question which had so often disturbed the public mind was again presented.

Henry Clay lost his election because he had written a letter to some friend in Alabama, that, "personally," he was not opposed to the annexation of Texas; politically, he was.

Martin Van Buren, the great democratic statesman of the North, was laid in the dust by the South, on this Texas question. It was universally conceded that he was to be the democratic nominee for the presidency in 1844. He had a majority of the delegates to the national convention; but he had dared to write a letter against the policy of annexing Texas. It was an able and convincing letter against its propriety; but the South, for this reason, doomed him to a political grave, and the fiat must be obeyed. His opinion stood in the way of their designs, and he must be immolated. So, when the convention met, by some legerdemain they got up the two-third rule, and by this means James K. Polk was trumped upon the surface. He was a man vastly inferior in talent to Mr. Van Buren, and but little known in the country; but he was the chosen instrument to carry out the purposes of the South, and well adapted to his position. Texas was annexed in 1845. I pass on now to New Mexico. In annexing Texas, Mr. Polk got up a war with Mexico, the sole design of which was, in the end, to steal some of her territory. He had repeatedly sought appropriation from Congress for that purpose, but was generally defeated by the persistent interference of the "Wilmot Proviso." However, the territory was finally purchased for fifteen millions of dollars. But to show the animus of the whole thing, in the course of the treaty with the Mexican Commissioners, Mr. Trist, in his official despatch, says, "that if it were in their power to offer the whole territory described in our project increased tenfold in value, and, in addition to that, covered a foot thick all over with pure gold, upon the single condition that slavery should be excluded there-



from, I could not entertain the offer for a moment, nor even think of communicating it to Washington."

Mr. Chairman. At this period of time the whole government of the country was under the influence and power of the slave oligarchy.

The executive, legislative and judicial departments all were required to do its bidding, and were prompt in the execution of every order.

We now approach the year 1848. This year is memorable for two great political events: 1st. A new political faith was got up for the Democratic party—by the South, of course. It appeared in a letter written by General Cass, the Democratic candidate for the Presidency, to Mr. Nicolson, of Tennessee. It obtained the sobriquet of "Squatter Sovereignty." It was got up by the slave power for the occasion, and subsequently abandoned by it. It left it optional with the inhabitants of the territories whether freedom or slavery should prevail. The popular cant of submitting to the will of the people, was dwelt upon with unusual energy. It made no difference that the doctrine ran directly counter to the well established opinions of all parties of earlier days. It made no difference that the Constitution had given the control of the territories to Congress. It made no matter that James Madison had submitted the question to his cabinet, upon the adoption of the "Missouri Compromise," whether Congress had the jurisdiction over slavery in the territories, and that every one of his cabinet, including John C. Calhoun, decided that it had. It was sufficient to know, that for the time being, the South demanded this new faith, and its dictum must be obeyed.

The second event was the re-uttering of an old political faith in the celebrated Buffalo Platform. Now, Sir, I pause to inquire who it was that got up this "Buffalo Platform?" I will here say to the reporter of the Atlas, that he will confer a great favor by reporting my remarks at length upon this subject, so that they may appear full in the Atlas. These reminiscences are extremely refreshing, and will be, no doubt, both to the editor of the Atlas and myself. Now, Sir, I ask again, who got up this "Buffalo Platform?" It was the radical Democrats who were its leading spirits; and where are they now? They were John Van Buren, Dean Richmond, William Cassidy of the Atlas and Argus, and others of the like kidney. And, Sir, what did they do in Convention at Buffalo? They adopted anti-slavery resolutions a great deal stronger than have ever been adopted by the Republican party since its organization. Why, Sir, we were to have no more slave states; our territories were never to be cursed with slavery; our banner was thrown to the breeze, and under it we were to "fight on and ever, until victory perched upon it." I had been an ardent Whig previous to this time. The Albany Evening Journal told us it was good Whig doctrine, and in fact I thought so myself; so I jumped upon the platform. Well, Sir, what was the sequel? John Van Buren, after floundering two or three years, writing letters and making anti-slavery speeches, "caved in."

Dean Richmond, after hanging around the outskirts for some time, dropped in among the "Softs," and this present moment stands somewhere half way between a vigorous prosecution of the war, and civil war, anarchy and bloodshed within the limits of the Empire State.

And what, sir, shall I say of William Cassidy? In bringing up his case I must necessarily show a marked contrast between a Democrat of 1848 and one of 1863. But a day or two since, I fortunately came across a copy of the Albany Atlas under date of April 6th, 1850. Up to that time, at all events, Mr. Cassidy proved true. I had the curiosity to examine it. I first ascertained who were the editors at that time. They were Van Dyck and Cassidy. I looked at the head of its editorial columns and was startled by seeing numerous indexes pointing downwards to an article pregnant with meaning, and what think you the article contained, here it is: "The stone which the builders refused shall become the head of the corner."

"Resolved, That while the democracy of New York, represented in convention, will faithfully adhere to all the compromises of the Constitution and maintain all the reserved rights of the states, they declare, since the crisis has arrived when that question must be met, their uncompromising hostility to the extension of slavery into territory now free, or which may be hereafter acquired by any action of the Government of the United States."

Who, at that period of time, wanted any better doctrine than this. I declare here in this place that it met my views completely and entirely. I shall have occasion to show before I close, the position that Mr. Cassidy *now* occupies. So you see these men, one after another, tore up a plank from this platform, which they were prominent in establishing, and sent me off with some other men clinging to the broken fragments upon an undiscovered sea.

The next event that occurred was the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854.

The country was startled from centre to circumference with the announcement of the contemplated outrage.

The responsible mover in this outrage was Stephen A. Douglas, backed by the entire southern delegation with five or six honorable exceptions. Stephen A. Douglas drew his first breath among the green hills of Vermont; he inhaled during the early period of his life the pure atmosphere of its freedom. But at the period of time alluded to, without one solitary petition for it from any portion of the country, without any action or demand for it from the people of the North, and in utter defiance of public opinion, he urged its repeal. With transcendent talents, unwonted energy, and beloved by his party, he unfortunately succeeded. And thus that which had obtained all the solemnity of a treaty, had been in existence for thirty-three years, and which all supposed was unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians was swept out of existence to satisfy the insatiable demands of an overshadowing power. This, of course, left all that portion of

the Louisiana territory dedicated to freedom by the compromise upon an ocean of uncertainty. I cannot find it in my heart at this moment to speak too harshly of Stephen A. Douglas; he is not now among the living. I am told that upon his dying bed he entreated his party to stand by the flag of the country. Many of his grave errors therefore may be forgiven.

Mr. HUTCHINS: Did not Mr. Douglas in 1848 propose to extend the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific?

Mr. REDINGTON: I think he did; but both the Whig and Democratic parties of that day were quite too willing to subserve the interests of slavery. We now come to a grand scene performed in the drama of the country. It was acted upon the plains of Kansas, and the footsteps of the performers were marked with blood. Here, Sir, in Kansas, the seeds were sown that enkindled the war now desolating our homes. Kansas was a portion of that territory laid open to slavery by the repeal of the Missouri compromise. A contest was invited between slave labor and free labor. The settled part of Kansas lying contiguous to the slave state of Missouri, made it convenient for slavery to show its poisonous tooth. Time will not permit me to go over the ground. The citizens of Massachusetts and other states, determined not to be deprived of their constitutional rights, determined not to be thwarted by the erasing of the Missouri line, poured in upon Kansas their unceasing flow of immigration. A contest ensued unparalleled in American history. I am proud to say that in the end Freedom triumphed, and Kansas was admitted as a free state in 1861. As it triumphed then, so I believe it will succeed in the ordeal through which our country is now passing.

Previous to these events the South claimed a right to transmit their slaves to any of the free territories, and hold them there as such in defiance of any acts of the General Government, and when once there they must be recognized by the Government and protected as such. They even claimed the right to bring their slaves into the free states and hold them there to suit their convenience, in defiance of state constitutions and state laws.

I allude to these things to show how rapidly this anaconda was winding itself around the body politic and crushing out its vitality. Now, Sir, we come to the Republican platform adopted at Chicago in 1860. There never was a Republican platform so anti-slavery as the one got up at Buffalo. The Republicans had adopted a resolution unalterably opposed to the extension of slavery into free territory, and this they were determined to maintain at the ballot box, submissive always to the popular judgment. This, Sir, was almost the only issue in the presidential election of that year.

The Republican party never have desired to infringe upon the constitutional rights of the South. They have never desired or claimed that they could interfere with the domestic institution of the South, within the limits of their respective state governments. They have declared to the world repeatedly that this was not

their design or intention. To establish this truth, it is only necessary to refer to the resolutions passed at every national convention of the Republican party, since it had an organization. It is only necessary to refer to the resolutions passed in the Congress of 1861.

On the 11th day of February, 1861, a resolution was passed, of which the following is a copy: "On motion of Mr. SHERMAN,

*Resolved*, That neither the Congress nor the people of Government of non-slaveholding states have a constitutional right to interfere with slavery in any slaveholding states of the Union. Yeas, 161. Nays, none."

In order that the people of the Southern States could have no possible pretense to doubt the sincerity of this principle of the Republican party, they passed a resolution in Congress on the 28th day of February, 1861, of which the following is a copy:

*Resolved*, That no amendment shall be made to the Constitution which will authorize or give Congress power to abolish or interfere with any state with the domestic institutions thereof, including that of persons held to labor or servitude by the laws of said state.

In another aspect if President Lincoln had been ever so much inclined to do injustice to the people of the South, of which there could be no pretense, what could he effect? Both houses of Congress were politically opposed to him, and the Supreme Court was under the control, as far as its politics were concerned, of the Democratic party. It must be admitted by all impartial men and impartial governments that they had not the slightest excuse to secede from the Union and inaugurate civil war. It must be apparent to all mankind that a determination on the part of the South to enlarge the area of slavery, to fasten it upon the free territories, to render the whole United States subservient to its interests, was the sole cause of the war now desolating our firesides and our homes. I do not believe we could have succeeded had not the Democrats of the South purposely divided the Democratic party. They did it for the express purpose that a pretext might be furnished for this conspiracy against the government. They did it with the wicked intent of imbruing their hands in their brothers blood. They did it with the murderous purpose of striking a fatal blow if possible at the Temple of Liberty.

Abraham Lincoln was duly elected President of the United States; he was constitutionally elected; he only is invested with the power to subdue this wicked rebellion, and any attempt to substitute any other power, is to bring civil war and anarchy upon us. For fear of violence, he secretly found himself at the Capitol; and what was the condition of things at Washington, just previous to his entering upon the high duties of his office? Is any Democrat in this house prepared to justify the acts of James Buchanan, and were they not marked with imbecility? Look at his cabinet, more than one-half of whom were tainted with the blackest treason. Our arsenals were sacked and plundered of their arms and munitions of war, and secretly conveyed South. Our army was scattered to remote distances, and stationed at inaccessible points.



Our navy was ordered to seas most remote, and entirely out of reach in the nation's extremity.

Washington was filled with traitors, spies, and informers. The clerks in the department of Washington were more or less tainted with treason. What heart is so cold that it could not sympathise with President Lincoln when he was inaugurated into office? Who does not realize to some extent the weight of that responsibility that could not be shunned—that does not feel that he was entitled to the full aid of all the loyal states, and was actuated by honest and patriotic motives? But I must pass on. On the 12th day of April, 1861, in the morning of that day, there floated from the walls of Fort Sumter, in all its beauty and splendor, the star spangled banner of our country. It floated from a fortress that belonged to the United States, in the harbor of Charleston. Within its walls there were some one hundred brave men, defending that flag against threatened violence and disgrace. Imprisoned within, and closed against all access to friends, they had fed upon their last crust, and waited calmly for the coming events. Around that fortress were some ten thousand men, bidding defiance to the government of which the flag that waived above the fortress was an emblem. They had fifteen batteries ready to pour in upon the fort their missiles of destruction. Suddenly was heard the roar of cannon and the thundering of artillery; every battery was opened with unrelenting fury, and hot shot and destruction came upon them. After a gallant defense, they surrendered to superior numbers. Thus fell Fort Sumpter, and thus commenced this bloody civil war.

Now I want particularly to call the attention of the Democrats in this house to the speech made by Gov. Pickens upon the surrender of the fort and its evacuation. Says he, "We have humbled the flag of the United States, and as long as I have the honor to preside over you as chief magistrate, so help me God, there is no power of this earth that shall ever lower from that fortress, those flags, unless they be lowered and trailed in a sea of blood. I can here say to you that it is the first time, in the history of this country, that the stars and stripes have been humbled. It has triumphed for seventy years, but to-day, on the 18th day of April, it has been humbled before the glorious little state of South Carolina." Yes, sir, and I reiterate the fact that it was never before humbled. It was the emblem of our glory and our greatness. Wherever that flag floated, were it upon the high seas, or in any harbor or port in the world, no nation dared to insult it. Every individual who had a right to its protection, however humble, was safe beneath its protecting folds. We never had a contest with any nation, when we were united, but what that flag came off with glory and honor. On the 15th of April, 1861, President LINCOLN issued his first proclamation asking for 75,000 volunteers to defend the Capitol from threatened invasion. I apprehend that at this period of time the President and his Cabinet had no just estimate of the strength and power of this rebellion. If so there would have been

500,000 men summoned to the field instead of 75,000. When that proclamation was issued what course did some of the Democrats take? What did the *Atlas & Argus* of this city say? It came out in a mean and unpatriotic article, denouncing it as unconstitutional. To prove what I say, here is an extract from the *Atlas & Argus*, under date of April 15th, 1861. In speaking of the proclamation, asking for 75,000 volunteers, it says: "Where does he find the power to do this? Congress refused to pass any law for such purpose. The existing acts of Congress confer no such authority. Is the proposition a mere attempt to brag? Let not our Democratic Legislatures be decoyed into countenancing any such act of usurpation."

MR. SEYMOUR: What were the views of Mr. Tremain at that time?

MR. REDINGTON: I have nothing to do with Mr. Tremain now. The petty quarrels of the Democrats with Mr. Tremain is of small moment in comparison with the magnitude of the subject I am now discussing. Suffice it to say that the organ of the Democrats, even at that time, embarrassed the administration with its unseemly opposition. Now, Sir, here is a happy time for me to allude to glorious old Massachusetts, the more so as an attempt has been made by a leading Democratic member of this house to *abuse, ill-treat and villify her*. Glorious and never to be forgotten Massachusetts! How fondly do I cling to the memory of thy earlier days! How I love to think of thy deeds of patriotism in the dawns of the Revolution! How I observe those men, in the garb of Indians, throwing those chests of tea from British vessels in Boston harbor, into the sea! How I think of that first blood shed at Lexington! that first battle fought at Bunker Hill, where the immortal Warren died for his country! How I linger around the name of Hancock and the Adams! How bold the signature of John Hancock to the Declaration of Independence! And has she lost any of her love of country from the lapse of time? Scarcely had the news of the proclamation reached the ear of Massachusetts when the streets of Boston resounded with the tread of armed men. Only three days from the date of the proclamation, and on the 18th of April, Massachusetts' regiments passed through New York on their way to the defense of the Capitol. Who can ever forget that memorable day, as they passed through Broadway, amidst the cheers, waving of handkerchiefs, and blessing of thousands and tens of thousands that thronged that great thoroughfare of the Metropolis. The nearest and most direct route to the Capitol was through the city of Baltimore. On the arrival of these Massachusetts regiments at Baltimore they found their progress impeded by an infuriated mob that thronged the streets, pelting them with stones, brickbats and other missiles of destruction; and several of the brave Massachusetts soldiers lost their lives, their blood sprinkling the pavements.

Sir, but a day or two since, resolutions were introduced into this house for partisan effect, highly laudatory of Gen. McClellan, and decla-

ring, among other things, that he had three times saved the Capitol, which all knew to be untrue. Sir, the only time that the Capitol has been seriously in danger was on this occasion, when the sons of the old Bay state were pressing on to its rescue. If credit is to be given for saving the Capitol, it belongs elsewhere than to Gen. McClellan.

MR. FIELDS: Was not the Capitol in danger when President Lincoln had every thing in readiness to remove to Philadelphia?

MR. REDINGTON: The President and his Cabinet may have had knowledge of danger not communicated to the public. As far as any communication of danger to the country is concerned, the Capitol has never been seriously menaced, at all events, to no further extent than what it was prepared for, other than the occasion to which I have alluded.

Sir, I regard Massachusetts as the brightest star in the galaxy of the original thirteen states. I regard her as the most resplendent star in the galaxy of the loyal states.

I am astonished that any member of the Legislature of the Empire State, born within its limits, educated in a New England college, could, in view of all these facts, arise in his place and seek to tarnish her well earned reputation, or make the attempt to villify and abuse her. I envy not that man's political sagacity who dared to do it. Could any one that really loves his country do it?

And I take it upon me to assert most emphatically, what no intelligent man will deny, that the Capitol *then* was in imminent peril; that it was surrounded with traitors; the departments of the Government more or less infected, and the army there to defend it, to some extent, suspected of infidelity. I also assert boldly that no loyal state is deserving of more credit for saving the Capitol than glorious old Massachusetts.

Mr. Chairman: We had Tories and cowboys of the Revolution, and what was the occupation of the "cowboys?" They existed more or less along and about the Hudson river. In what particular pleasures were they indulging? They were feeding and supplying the British armies then holding and possessing New York. They were secretly spying out the land and carrying the earliest information to the "Redcoats" wherever they could be found. They had their reward. The finger of scorn was pointed at them while life lasted. Infamy followed their footsteps along life's uneven way until they dropped into dishonored graves. But did the disgrace which hung around these characters cease when life terminated? No; nor it never will. Consult the history that records the events of the American Revolution, and there you will find the record true to life, and that record will be handed down to all posterity. It will be an incontestable proof of the estimate formed of their characters by those immortal patriots to whom we are indebted for our country. Now for the parallel. The nation is now endeavoring to crush a wicked and causeless rebellion. The momentous question hangs suspended in the

balance whether freedom or slavery is to prevail on this continent. Under these circumstances we must admit that we have members upon the floor of this house who do everything they can to embarrass the National Government in its struggle for existence, and who lose no opportunity to oppose the Administration. For instance, in the matter of "arbitrary arrests," what outbursts of eloquence on the suspension of the writ of "habeas corpus"—what unusual and sudden zeal manifested in behalf of constitutional rights. One gentleman tells us (Mr. DEAN of New York) "that if there is another arbitrary arrest made there will be revolution, and there ought to be." He tells us further, that "two can play at the game of 'arbitrary arrests,'" threatening thereby the friends of the Administration with arbitrary arrest, (according to the meaning they put upon the term,) if they persist in shielding the Government in the policy which in this respect they have thought best to pursue. And who is to be the instrument of this warfare between the State and National Government? Horatio Seymour, the Governor of the Empire State. Whence all this sudden zeal? Two of the members who have spoken against the arrests were members of the last House. (Messrs. TALMAN and JOHN S. HAVENS.) These arrests were many of them made in the Summer and Fall of 1861. Why were these Democrats so silent during the last session of the Legislature, under this, as they say, monstrous assumption of power. Why, indeed, was there not some whisper to warn the Administration of the civil war with which they now threaten us in this State?

And now, Sir, on another point, they are doing all they can to bring reproach upon the Administration. They attack the currency of the country. They hate the "green backs" with perfect hatred, and lose no opportunity, either public or private, to depreciate the value of our National currency. When the public confidence is shaken in the financial policy of the Government, when there is a want of faith in its paper issues founded upon the wealth and integrity of the commonwealth, consequences the most dire and dreadful are almost sure to happen.

Sir, I might continue to show instances too numerous to mention, for the time I have a right to consume, wherein these men are aiding and comforting the enemy. They were once silent, but now they come out from their hiding places bold and defiant. Says one member on the floor of this House, turning his eye towards the gallery, "I tell you the Democrats are some," and down came the response that was sought for. Now, Sir, I take it upon me to say that all these acts and sayings, whatever may be their intent, are tending directly to anarchy and riot in our own State, and will most assuredly bury their authors in political infamy. These acts, Sir, have a tendency to paralyze the strong arm raised for the salvation of the country. They demoralize our armies; they disunite where there should be union; and if untold miseries and destruction to our country should result from it,

they and their abettors must bear the awful responsibility.

Mr. Chairman: The strength and power of the Rebellion, at the present moment, is slavery. The President, anxious to unite the country, and hoping to break up the entanglements of party, prosecuted the war very much in accordance with the wishes of the Democratic party, in the earlier stages of it. He mostly entrusted the command of the armies to men of that political faith. He forebore to strike the blow at the heart of the rebellion, for a long time. With the love of country that has never been exceeded; with an earnestness and enthusiasm unparalleled, armies were raised by volunteering, with no compulsory process whatever, to put down those traitors who were raising bloody hands against the government that our fathers gave us; fathers, brothers, husbands, left home, with all the unnumbered blessings that cluster around the social circle; severed all those dear relations between husband and wife, father and son, brother and sister, which language has no power to describe; sacrificed all, *all*, upon the altar of their country. They loved all these with a tensity that defies description, but they loved their country more. But, Sir, as long as the war was carried on so as to protect, rather than destroy, slavery; so as to strengthen the cause of the war, rather than weaken it; the blood shed, and the sacrifices made, produced comparatively little results, and slavery had the decided advantage. It dug the trenches—it built the embankments—it fortified the towns—it waited upon and executed the order of its master. In the meantime, the Southern troops, officers and soldiers, were fresh and vigorous to wield the weapons of death upon our brave volunteers. Slavery also raised the cotton that gave credit to the so-called Confederate States, by which they raised money for the purposes of their revolutionary government. Slavery raised the corn to supply the army, and protected the plantation in the absence of its master. Not so with Freedom. Free men had to remain at home and cultivate food for the supply of its armies. Free men had to dig and work, and perform manual labor in thousands of ways, other than in perils of the battle-field. The country saw this; the President saw it. He preferred the maintenance of the Union without slavery, than its destruction with it. He therefore resolved, with great care and caution, to issue his proclamation of freedom. He was slow, deliberate, but firm. He gave the rebels ample time to submit—to lay down their arms—to come under the protection of the Constitution as it was. Time moved along, and the eventful 1st of January, 1863, came on. It was a day pregnant with events. The slave in his lonely cabin had heard that the day was approaching; his cruel and unrelenting master was anxious; the rumbling of Democratic murmurs was sounding in the North; the Union men of the North trembled, for fear that the purposes of the President might be shaken; the eastern continent looked on with hope and yet with distrust. Time would not wait. It was the fiat of destiny that that proclamation should come forth, and out it broke,

making memorable January 1, 1863. Now, Sir, fight against this state paper as you may, it will stand. Saying nothing about its being a "military necessity," which most certainly it is, it is founded upon the principles of eternal justice, and it *can not* be moved. It is a rock upon which clamor will beat in vain. Take the matter calmly as possible, for the proclamation is destined to prevail. How passing strange that the Democracy should still cling to slavery with such pertinacity, in its dying struggles.

Mr. Chairman: I am about to sit down, and have only a word or two more to add. I speak plainly and boldly. I represent a constituency of which I am proud, and they demand of me the performance of my duty. They stand on the rock of freedom. They are for the Union now and forever, "one and inseparable," and woe be unto me, politically, if I utter an uncertain sound. I have heard the threatening language used on this floor, from time to time, with astonishment, but not with fear. They mistake me—they mistake my constituents if they expect to frighten us. I know the dread consequences of a conflict between the state and national government, and I know who will be responsible for it if it ever takes place. In the assembly chamber of the Empire State has been uttered language of the most incendiary character. It seems to me that attempts have been made to fire the embers of civil war within our limits and bring down upon our population all its attendant horrors. I tell these men to beware, lest they dash themselves against a rock that will break them in pieces. In that dark strife they invoke, even if successful, they will only be buried with others among the ruins. There is a determination among the masses to save our country which they have not fathomed, and they will not succeed, though they may desire to be the "architects of ruin." In times like these life is of no value only as it may be necessary to save our institutions, and before you accomplish your purpose you will have to trample over the dead bodies of more men than you now dream of. Rather than the dark wing of slavery shall brood over the continent and dictate to us terms of dishonorable peace, there are millions that would perish in the last ditch. You may fancy that you have the support of the Executive of this state in your revolutionary designs; but in this you are destined to very great disappointment. Those venerable Democrats in this House who have disapproved your proceedings have doubtless more of his sympathy. Mr. Chairman, there is no true friend of his country that desires to outlive it. If everything dear belonging to home is to be destroyed, he wants to be buried among the ruins. He has no desire to see the flag of his country go down, the Union torn into fragments, and we, having become a reproach among the nations, be obliged to wander about, without a home or a country. But none of this is to take place. He who ruleth in the armies of Heaven and doeth His will upon the earth, will be our Protector. He never established this government on the western continent to be blotted from the face of existence.

The threatening clouds now hanging over us are to be dissipated by the dawn of brighter days. The STAR of freedom is to be in the ascendant. We shall pass through the dreadful ordeal we are now experiencing, purged of excrescences, purified in the crucible, and shine doubly resplendent. The flag of our common country shall wave more glorious than ever; our strength

and our greatness increase in tenfold proportion, and no clanking chain other than for crime be heard in the land. The fetters that have hitherto bound humanity shall be broken—the rod of the oppressor shall be powerless, and over our entire country, North and South, East and West, Freedom shall reign in undisputed empire.